



# Memorandum

Date: November 5, 2003

From: Network Director, VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (10N/22)

Subj: Research Foundation reminders

To: Directors, Associate Directors, Chiefs of Staff, ACOSs/R and ACOSs/E  
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (VISN 22)

**VA Greater  
Los Angeles  
Healthcare  
System**  
*Los Angeles, CA*

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**VA Loma Linda  
Healthcare  
System**  
*Loma Linda, CA*

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**VA Long Beach  
Healthcare  
System**  
*Long Beach, CA*

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**VA San Diego  
Healthcare  
System**  
*San Diego, CA*

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**VA Southern  
Nevada  
Healthcare  
System**  
*Las Vegas, NV*

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1. It has recently come to our attention that the OIG is examining the issue of meals and refreshments provided by the Non-Profit Research and Education Foundations. Because of this, it may be a good time to revisit the policies and procedures of your Non-Profit Foundation in this area.
2. In general, all expenditures should be tied to either research approved by your VA R&D Committee or education activities approved by your VA Education Committee and further the best interests of VA. The OIG has suggested that Medical Center Directors ensure that their Non-Profit Foundations establish and implement policies prohibiting the use of Non-Profit Foundation funds to purchase food and entertainment for holiday and retirement functions, internal staff meetings, and unapproved education or training activities. When the OIG has found instances where meals and refreshments have been provided for activities lacking appropriate research/education approval, the OIG is suggesting disciplinary action for the Medical Center Director, as the ranking VA official on the Non-Profit Foundation board of directors.
3. We would encourage you to have clearly defined guidelines for providing meals and refreshments at allowable meetings. For example, if you provide light refreshments at Research Seminars or IRB meetings, it may be a good idea to establish a policy following the NAVREF criteria for providing meals and refreshments.
4. If you have questions regarding these issues, please contact Skye McDougall, PhD, Network Research Officer, at (310) 268-4658.

Kenneth J. Clark, FACHE

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